



**AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017**

The City Council of Austin, Texas convened in a Special Called meeting on Thursday, October 26, 2017, 2716 Spirit of Texas (Aviation Planning & Engineering Auditorium, Room #174), Austin, Texas.

Mayor Adler called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

1. Discuss policy priorities, goals, and the potential impacts on governance for the City of Austin.

Discussion occurred on the Citywide Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements drafted during the workshop held in April.

Steve Struthers laid out the objectives for the day as follows:

- A) Provide feedback and direction on Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements; and
- B) Provide direction on budget redesign.

Staff members Matt Dugan and Sam Thetford delivered a five year progress report on the Imagine Austin Plan.

Health Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Sara Hensley, Interim Assistant City Manager.

Discussion occurred on the Health Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.

- 1) How do we create conditions that result in optimal physical, mental, and behavioral health, while ensuring access to health services are available to all Austinites?

Direction was given to staff to revise outcome one to read: "How do we create conditions that result in optimal physical, mental, and behavioral health, and ensuring access to health services are available to all Austinites?"

Direction was given to staff to revise the first sentence of Health Challenge #1 – Nature of the Challenge to read as follows: "A person's health, and ability to make healthy choices, is directly affected by where they live, work, learn, play, and create."

Direction was given to staff to revise the second Evidence bullet point by removing the reference to recreation facilities and adding the following as an additional area of focus by emphasizing: "The importance of recreation facilities and after-school programs to address healthy living and obesity, especially in children."

- 2) How do we ensure race, ethnicity, gender, age, education, geographic location, and income level do not pre-determine whether you are able to achieve better health?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate those City of Austin zip codes that extend into Williamson County into the geographic area being analyzed.

- 3) How do we achieve high standards on environmental quality (air, water, and land) for all Austinites, as well as equitable access to parks and open space, to realize the health benefits provided by a sustainable environment?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate explicit references to water quality and climate change in outcome three.

Direction was given to staff to emphasize the connection between the environment and health outcomes.

Direction was given to staff to incorporate equitable access to sidewalks and walkability into this challenge statement.

- 4) How do we support more resilient and connected communities, strengthen our community well-being and enabling more effective responses and recoveries tied to major events?
- 5) How do we embed consideration of factors that affect health status within all City departments, and strengthen collaboration with external providers and stakeholders, to increase synergy and improve health outcomes?

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge five to read as follows: “How do we embed consideration of factors that affect health status within all City departments, and strengthen collaboration with external providers and stakeholders, to increase synergy and improve physical and behavioral health outcomes?”

General Direction was given to staff to prioritize resource allocation towards proactive prevention as opposed to reacting to various public health emergencies across all health challenge statements.

Direction was given to staff to incorporate the cost of childcare into the affordability index.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 10:19 a.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Economic Opportunity and Affordability Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Jackie Sargent, General Manager, Austin Energy.

Discussion occurred on the Economic Opportunity and Affordability Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.

Economic Opportunity and Affordability Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements:

- 1) How might we break the cycle of poverty and inequity so that all residents experience economic mobility?

Direction was given to staff to highlight the issue of unequal distribution of opportunity.

Direction was given to staff to emphasize the creation of good jobs, as determined by wages and benefits, not just the number of jobs.

Direction was given to staff to emphasize education and trade skills training as keys to unlocking economic mobility and breaking the cycle of poverty.

- 2) How do we maintain a resilient economy and provide equitable opportunities for people and business?

Direction was given to staff to revise the second challenge statement to read: “How do we maintain a strong and resilient economy and provide equitable opportunities for people and business?”

Direction was given to staff to place more emphasis on small businesses, job creation, and business permitting.

Direction was given to staff to recognize and address the employer side of the jobs equation so the city can provide a counter-market force which incentivizes employment of Austinites over non-Austin residents.

- 3) How might we ensure Austin’s land use policies, processes and programs help create more complete communities in our city?

Direction was given to staff to consider incorporating language clarifying that land use processes and programs alone are insufficient to meeting the goal of “complete communities”. The scope of this challenge should be broadened to include childcare and education as also being central to the objective of creating “complete communities”.

Direction was given to staff to address the policy inconsistency between a desire for compact and complete communities with the habit of annexing outlying areas.

- 4) As cost of living rises, how might we increase equitably distributed options for household affordability in all parts of town?

Direction was given to staff to consider language clarifying that challenge statement four is about addressing housing market failures separate from land use policies such as funding affordable housing initiatives.

- 5) How might we work to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in Austin?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate language indicating that the causes of homelessness should be addressed, not just reducing the current number of homeless individuals.

Direction was given to staff to revise the language of challenge statement five to read: “How do we work to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in Austin?”

General Direction was given to staff to incorporate more family-centric issues in these challenge statements.

Direction was given to staff to prioritize workforce development and entrepreneurship with the caveat that the city should not be subsidizing workforce development that should be financed by the private sector and instead leverage other strategies such as public-private partnerships where such strategies are feasible.

Direction was given to staff to add economic empowerment as another core concept in addition to economic mobility and equity.

Direction was given to staff to continue identify opportunities for the creation of economic centers outside of the downtown core.

Direction was given to staff to incorporate a more expansive list of challenges when analyzing the affordability issue, in particular school finance, utility rates/fees, childcare and property taxes.

Direction was given to staff to put more emphasis on distinguishing between affordability issues that can be directly affected through Council action and cost-of-living affordability in the city generally, so as to avoid missing critical affordability issues that primarily affect the middle class.

Direction was given to staff to review the regional affordability plan with Travis County and ensure that the plans are aligned.

Direction was given to staff to embed the impact of Council actions on affordability in all of the challenge statements.

Culture and Learning Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Greg Canally, Interim Chief Financial Officer.

Discussion occurred on the Economic Opportunity and Affordability Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.

Culture and Learning Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements:

- 1) How do we inclusively honor and preserve Austin's unique and diverse history, culture, and traditions?
- 2) How do we foster and model relationships of trust, incorporate diverse viewpoints, and work to undo discrimination and racism at all levels (personal, cultural, and institutional) in our community and in our organization.
- 3) How do we create systems that recognize the ability of underrepresented communities to co-create solutions with local government and with each other?

Direction was given to staff to recognize that solutions must include areas and communities outside of the downtown core by ensuring equitable distribution of outreach events across the city as well as ensuring sufficient availability of public transit options so that all communities can participate.

Direction was given to staff to consider whether challenge statement three is excessively reiterated across multiple outcome challenge statements to the point of distracting from the clarity of the other challenge statements.

- 4) How do we ensure Austin is equitably and effectively supporting lifelong learning?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate language that clarifies that challenge statement four is not just about educational opportunities for children, but also includes seniors.

Direction was given to staff to consider revising challenge statement four to read: “How do we ensure Austin is effectively and equitably supporting lifelong learning?”

Direction was given to staff to consider whether an emphasis on education belongs in this section or whether it makes more sense to reference the subject as a part of economic opportunity in order to avoid potential duplication.

- 5) How do we ensure the creative ecosystem has equitable access to capacity building and revenue development resources and capital?

Direction was given to staff to clarify the definition of “creative ecosystem” and incorporate language that includes all kinds of artists, not just musicians, in the definition.

Direction was given to staff to consider revising challenge statement five by moving “equitable” to the end of the question in order to clarify that unless capacity building and revenue development are successful there is nothing to equitably distribute.

- 6) How do we increase the supply of affordable public and private spaces (e.g. housing, work, studio, performance) for our creative ecosystem to survive?

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge statement five to read: “How do we increase the supply of affordable public and private spaces (e.g. housing, work, studio, performance, and museum/gallery space) for our creative ecosystem to survive?”

General Direction was given to staff to clarify if families and seniors were being factored into all of these challenge statement analyses.

Direction was given to staff to examine school funding issues on a school to school basis within districts, not just on a district to district basis.

Direction was given to staff to consider combining challenge statements five and six and expanding the focus to include equitable access to a range of additional resources for artists, such as healthcare.

Direction was given to staff to consider adding a new challenge statement exploring strategies for embedding the creative arts into other areas of the community.

Direction was given to staff to explore strategies for leveraging private sector prosperity in the city to aid in achieving the goals of these challenge statements and aiding the creative class.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 12:42 p.m.

Safety Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Ray Baray, Chief of Staff, City Manager’s Office.

Discussion occurred on the Safety Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.**Safety Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements:**

- 1) How do we deliver timely, effective public safety services for a diverse community in the face of challenges such as significant population growth, racial inequities, and traffic congestion?

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge statement one to include prioritization of long-term and proactive public safety actions that can help address issues, such as domestic violence, before they reach the point of requiring an emergency response.

Direction was given to staff to explicitly recognize the intersection of public health and the role played by emergency response services in addressing non-emergency public health issues, such as homelessness, through prevention.

Direction was given to staff to address not just the effective delivery of services, but also to prioritize strategies that help reduce the need for emergency services by recognizing the linkages between economic mobility and public safety.

- 2) How do we ensure and build meaningful community relationships so that by working together we create a safe Austin for all of us?
- 3) How do we strengthen community relationships so that all Austinites are prepared to respond to natural and human-caused hazards, including digital security breaches?

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge statement three to broaden the scope beyond just internal community relationships to include relationships between communities and between communities and emergency services.

- 4) How do we ensure that City enforcement and justice processes are consistently fair and impartial and strive to eliminate inequities?

Direction was given to staff to give more priority to crimes that affect women.

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge statement four to read: “How do we ensure that City enforcement and justice processes are consistently fair, impartial, accountable, and transparent and strive to eliminate inequities?”

- 5) As the region grows, how do we proactively identify, assess, and manage risks related to the quality and reliability of critical infrastructure and utilities services?

Direction was given to staff to expand the scope of challenge statement five by replacing “critical infrastructure” with “critical assets” in recognition of non-infrastructure related vulnerabilities.

General Direction was given to staff to incorporate language which acknowledges that disasters such as wild fires and flooding do not just affect critical infrastructure and that the city needs to prioritize community resiliency and engagement strategies.

Direction was given to staff to explicitly recognize that the community’s relationship with public safety services is of paramount importance as an outcome, not just the traditional metrics of service delivery and response.

Direction was given to staff to include youth programs and services in its prevention strategies.

Government that Works Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Mark Washington, Assistant City Manager

Discussion occurred on the Government that Works Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.

Government that Works Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements:

- 1) How might we build a more trusting, collaborative decision-making process amongst Council, City Management, and our Community to increase productivity and transparency?

Direction was given to staff to examine the city's board/commission structure to see if there is a way to reduce the current number.

Direction was given to staff to provide more specific data on the volume of citizen speakers at Council meetings.

Direction was given to staff to provide data on the number of citizens who speak at board/commission meetings.

Direction was given to staff to see metrics on the quality of community and constituent engagement efforts, not just the quantity.

Direction was given to staff to incorporate recognition that those people able to devote the time to attend Council meetings are a specific subset of the population with the means to do so and are not a representative sample of the entire population.

- 2) How might we achieve more equitable outcomes and deliver services that meet or exceed the expectations of the people we serve?

Direction was given to staff to evaluate the processes in place for responding to customer inquiries.

- 3) How might we continue to meet the needs of a rapidly growing city, while managing organizational capacity and ensuring fiscal responsibility?

Direction was given to staff to also include metrics highlighting the growth of tax collections as a percentage as an addition to evidence bullet four.

- 4) How might we improve our approach to facilities and infrastructure management to ensure high-quality, efficient, and sustainable portfolio that supports staff and customer?

- 5) How might we mature the City's data and technology capabilities to provide secure and scalable solutions that enable staff to deliver accessible, modern, and impactful services to all residents?

Direction was given to staff to specifically call out efficiency and cost effectiveness as additional core concepts to challenge statement five.

- 6) How might we attract and retain a talented workforce that sustains a workplace culture of engagement, customer focus, and high performance?

- 7) How might we improve engagement to include voices of our most vulnerable populations, demonstrate the impact of public input, and generate meaningful outcomes for the community?

Direction was given to staff to consider revising the wording of challenge statement seven to be more inclusive of all populations, not just vulnerable populations, while also clarifying that engagement with vulnerable populations is not currently absent, but could be improved.

General Direction was given to staff to address the issue of coordination and interaction between multiple levels of government, other municipalities, regionally and internationally in recognition of how this affects the role and ability of city government to respond at the municipal level.

Direction was given to staff to include an item that would promote and encourage access to inexpensive broadband internet is equitable and available to all residents.

Mobility Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements

Presentation was made by Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager.

Discussion occurred on the Mobility Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements.

Mobility Strategic Outcomes Challenge Statements:

- 1) How do we lower the risk of travel-related injury and protect and promote public health?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate language addressing street and trail lighting to provide an alternative safe way to get across the city without driving.

- 2) How do we supply a transportation network that can meet the demands of a growing region while providing equitable access to transportation choices, opportunities, and services?

Direction was given to staff to revise challenge statement two to read: “How do we supply a transportation network that can meet the demands of a growing region while providing equitable access to multi-modal transportation choices, opportunities, and services?”

Direction was given to staff to incorporate a more explicit reference to the dearth of good public transit options in the city while acknowledging that the city is only a part of the transport authority.

Direction was given to staff to explore options for providing real-time notification to residents of traffic jams in an effort to improve traffic flows.

Direction was given to staff to examine strategies for incentivizing modal shifts on the part of the population.

Direction was given to staff to consider revisions to challenge statement two to make it more specific about the individual challenges being addressed as laid out in the previous directions to staff on this challenge statement.

- 3) How do we prepare for and lead in leveraging rapidly evolving technology in transportation?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate language that clarifies that a primary focus is on electric and autonomous vehicles.

Direction was given to staff to recognize that emerging technologies will have both workforce and land use consequences that will need to be addressed and that are not easily predicted.

- 4) How do we ensure a financially and environmentally sustainable transportation network?
- 5) How do we effectively collaborate with agencies, organizations and the Austin community around mobility decision-making?

Direction was given to staff to incorporate language clarifying that challenge statement five is also about pursuing effective regional solutions and collaboration.

General Direction was given to staff to more clearly delineate between air quality as environmental (challenge statement four) and public health issues (challenge statement one) that are related but separate.

Direction was given to staff to include a glossary of terms for all the acronyms being used throughout the presentation.

Direction was given to staff to emphasize a reduction in commute times as a primary challenge.

All Strategic Outcome and Challenge Statements – Crosscutting Focuses:

- **Equitable and Effective Community Engagement**
- **Proactive Prevention Solutions [as opposed to more costly reactive solutions]**
- **Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Prioritization**

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Budget Redesign and Realignment

Presentation was made by Ed Van Eenoo, Deputy Chief Financial Officer.

Council participated in a discussion of the seven principles and provided direction to staff to further guide the budget redesign.

Straw Principles:

- 1) We will align the budget to the six outcomes of the Strategic Plan

Council expressed a desire to apply this principle to old programs and ideas; not just new ones (also applicable to principle six).

Direction was given to staff to provide clear guidance to Council and the public on which strategic outcome an item is addressed and where to find the item within the budget within the budget document.

- 2) We will identify and evaluate ideas for how the City might allocate its resources as early as possible in the process

Council identified the need to ensure that the budget redesign aligns with staff processes for vetting vendors while also exploring ways to redesign the staff process itself so it occurs earlier in the budget process and places a greater emphasis on equity and capacity building.

Council identified a need to create space to think more creatively about how the city raises revenue and some of the constraints that are placed on departments which limit the incentives for departments to prioritize revenue generation.

- 3) When we propose a new idea for consideration, we will clarify which of the six outcomes it is intended to improve and, if possible, the indicator or metric that it is seeking to influence.

Council expressed a desire to redesign the budget process in a way that aids Council in making tough funding prioritization decisions by placing more of an emphasis on identifying metrics and indicators rather than on alignment with one of the six strategic outcomes.

Revise principle three to read: “When we propose a new idea for consideration, we will clarify which of the six outcomes it is intended to improve and the indicator or metric that it is seeking to influence.”

- 4) We will approach the budget development process as a collaborative effort between Council and staff, with each focusing on their respective role of policy direction-setting (Council) and operational implementation (staff)

Council expressed a desire for a better mechanism for communicating policy directives to staff other than by passing resolutions without a corresponding funding conversation until budget season.

- 5) We will comply with our established financial policies
- 6) We will make budget decisions based upon aligning Council priorities and community needs, as evidenced by data and community input.

Council identified a need for more/better metrics on whether or not a specific program is having a positive effect if the goal is to transition to outcomes based budget process.

- 7) We will ensure that the budget process is open, transparent and accessible; as such, we will encourage and facilitate inclusive opportunities for public input and debate on budgetary choices.

All partners (non-profits, departments, etc.) which receive city funds need to be engaged on the implications of the budget redesign and how it is tied to the outcomes and metrics so the metrics and outcomes are aligned between the city and the contractor.

Council identified the lack of a sunset mechanism for identifying programs that may no longer be required.

Council identified a need for a mechanism to clearly distinguish between desired long-term and immediate outcomes and the attended time horizons for each so as to better inform funding and provide appropriate performance expectations.

Council expressed a desire that any spending or investment decision being considered needs to be clear about whether the expected effect is intended to be lasting or temporary, preventative or palliative.

Council identified the need to be able to determine if a particular program was achieving multiple goals at once.

Council identified a need to “create room to fail” for programs in an effort to promote innovation by reevaluating the consequences of failed programs on department funding levels. Possibly by establishing a specific innovation fund, where performance metrics are designed with a higher risk tolerance in mind.

Council identified a need to have more data on funding being provided by non-city entities to programs and services that also receive city funding in an effort to get a more comprehensive view of overall funding levels [as opposed to just city funding] on social service programs such as health care, energy efficiency, etc.

Council identified a need to prioritize funding positive outcomes in those core issue areas where the City [as opposed to AISD or Travis County] has primary jurisdiction and responsibility in recognition of the fact that the city is not always the most appropriate organization to address certain issues.

Council expressed a desire to identify which programs it is feasible to conduct return on investment studies of and improve mechanisms for collecting that type of data.

Mayor Adler adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m. without objection.

The minutes were approved on this the 9th day of November 2017 on Council Member Garza’s motion, Council Member Pool’s second on an 11-0 vote.